

7 AUGUST, 2026

SOUTHERN INTERIOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 563 SALMON ARM STN MAIN, BC V1E 4N7
250-851-6653 INFO@SILGA.CA

HONOURABLE DAVID EBY
PREMIER OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
PO BOX 9041 STN PROV GOVT
VICTORIA, BC, V8W 9E1

HONOURABLE RANDENE NEILL
MINISTER OF WATER, LAND AND RESOURCE STEWARDSHIP
PO BOX 9012 STN PROV. GOVT.
VICTORIA, BC V8M 9L6

HONOURABLE RAVI PARMAR
MINISTER OF FORESTS
PO BOX 9049 STN PROV GOVT
VICTORIA, BC V8W 9E2



Dear Premier Eby, Minister Neill, and Minister Parmar,

Re: Jurisdictional Clarity and Intervention on Crown Land Homeless Encampments

On behalf of the Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA), representing 37 municipalities and regional districts across British Columbia's Southern Interior, I am writing to the Province with an urgent request to clearly designate the Ministry and office(s) responsible for intervening on Crown Land encampments and ensuring the safety of encampment residents and their surroundings.

As more constituents across the Province experience housing instability from the rising costs of living and structure loss from worsening climate disasters, we anticipate homeless encampments in our region to grow. Currently, nearly every community adjacent to Highway 1, Highway 97, or Highway 5 in the Interior - regardless of size - hosts an encampment adjacent to municipal land. For some of our smaller communities, these encampment residents account for more than 1 in 100 of the total population: providing wraparound services for these residents and ensuring the safety of the surrounding community is an outsized burden on rural communities. Despite this, only one of our members has received any sizable intervention from the NROS.

We therefore join UBCM and many of SILGA's members in advocating for immediate action on the following:

1. Assigning a ministry or agency to take responsibility for Crown Land encampment intervention;
2. Expediting a review of existing encampments' threat levels to communities and assigning an agency to urgently safeguard critical infrastructure through cleanup of hazardous materials;
3. Providing adequate wraparound supports for encampment residents and resources for accessing shelter beds, temporary housing, and other existing services;

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4. Working with provincial land managers, BC Housing, Interior Health, and emergency services on a coordinated public safety plan to manage future encampments with dignity and speed; and
5. Increasing funding for non-profits and community organizations currently shouldering an outsized percentage of community services for unhoused residents.

Unhoused people are our constituents and community members, too: ensuring the dignity of encampment residents and the safety of surrounding municipal infrastructure from fire and contamination must be a core part of the Province's approach to our housing crisis. Furthermore, rural communities and their residents are entitled to equitable access to services readily provided to larger centres hosting similar encampments. For these reasons, we urge the Province to expedite both the creation of jurisdictional clarity and mandates for a uniform response to Crown Land Encampments across all communities impacted.

Thank you for your consideration of our request, and we look forward to hearing from the Province concerning this growing need facing our member communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Sarai". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bill" and last name "Sarai" clearly distinguishable.

Bill Sarai, President

Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA)